UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/986
S/1996/474
3 July 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fiftieth session
Agenda items 42, 44, 66 and 73
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Note verbale dated 1 July 1996 from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to him by Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, concerning the outcome of the Arab Summit held in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996.

The Permanent Mission requests that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General the assurances of its highest consideration.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 23 June 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt addressed to the Secretary-General

The Arab Summit that has been meeting in Cairo over the past few days, that is to say from 21 to 23 June 1996, has now completed its work. The Arab leaders met to consider developments in the peace process in the Middle East, to begin a process aimed at remedying certain negative manifestations that have recently marred inter-Arab relations, and to stimulate inter-Arab cooperation.

With regard to the peace process, the Arab leaders affirmed their commitment to a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principles agreed upon, stated that they would continue the endeavour to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and stressed that this position represented a goal and a strategic choice on their part. In this connection, the Arab leaders called for the resumption of the Arab-Israeli negotiations on all tracks.

In another respect, the Arab leaders expressed evident concern at the policy guidelines recently adopted by the new Israeli Government and at the statement made by the Israeli Prime Minister to the Knesset on 18 June last. They expressed apprehension that the positions set forth in the guidelines reflected a departure from the basic terms of reference agreed upon at the Madrid Conference, particularly the principle of land for peace. This may lead to a retreat from the implementation of the agreements reached by the Israeli and Palestinian sides in accordance with the Oslo accord.

Accordingly, it was necessary for the Arab leaders to call upon the new Israeli Government, without equivocation, to continue to abide by the letter and spirit of the principles agreed upon for the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and to comply with the agreement reached by the parties concerned. In this context, they affirmed that a just and comprehensive peace must be based on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and on the principle of land for peace. The Arab leaders called upon Israel to affirm a reciprocal commitment to the peace process and its underlying principles, and they warned that any retreat by Israel from this process would have adverse consequences for stability and security in the region and would force the Arab States to reconsider the steps taken vis-à-vis Israel in the framework of the peace process.

The Arab Summit has sent a clear and unequivocal message that the Arab world is committed to the achievement of peace in the Middle East. At the same time, it has made it clear that this commitment requires a reciprocal commitment on Israel's part. The Summit also provided an opportunity for inter-Arab contacts, including the contacts held by President Hafez al-Assad with King Hussein and with President Yasser Arafat, which will doubtless be conducive to promoting the peace process in the Middle East and to strengthening inter-Arab cooperation.

I should like to inform you that President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak will be meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and with a number of Arab leaders and other Heads of State in order to discuss the future of the peace process and determine the nature of the next steps to be taken. In this context, I should be happy to consult with you on ways to advance the peace process and on the steps necessary to achieve a comprehensive peace and stability in the Middle East.

I enclose herewith the text of the final communiqué of the Summit, and I request you to have it circulated as a United Nations document.

(Signed) Amre MOUSSA
Minister for Foreign Affairs

APPENDIX

Final communiqué of the Arab Summit Conference
held in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996

At the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Arab Heads of State held an Arab Summit Conference in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996.

The Arab leaders expressed their strong approval of the opening address made by President Mubarak in his capacity as Chairman of the Conference, and they decided that the text of the address should be issued as a document of the Conference.

Acting in response to the hopes and aspirations of the Arab nation and out of faith in its common destiny and placing their trust in the bonds of Arab brotherhood, the Arab leaders met together, in the light of the current critical stage in the Middle East peace process, to consider new developments in the region, to give new life to joint Arab action and to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of inter-Arab consultation, coordination and cooperation in an endeavour to invigorate and rally the Arab nation, to develop Arab solidarity as a means of realizing the purposes and principles of joint Arab action and to mobilize the potential of the Arab nation in order to protect its interests, recover its impugned rights and enhance efforts for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In the light of their responsibility to the Arab nation, the Arab leaders affirm that the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace, requires: the complete withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Palestinian territories, including Arab Jerusalem; the ability of the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination and establish an independent State with Arab Jerusalem as its capital, given that the question of Palestine is at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict; complete Israeli withdrawal from the Syrian Golan to the boundary of 4 June 1967; and complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Western Bekaa to the internationally recognized boundaries. In accordance with these principles, they call for the resumption of negotiations on all tracks without delay.

The commitment of the Arab States to continuing the peace process in order to secure a peace that is just and comprehensive represents a goal and a strategic choice to be achieved under international legitimacy. This requires a reciprocal commitment from Israel, stated in solemn and unequivocal terms, as well as action to carry through the peace process so that rights are restored, the occupied territories are returned and security for all the countries of the region is guaranteed in a balanced and equitable manner in accordance with the principles agreed upon at the Madrid Conference, and that of land for peace in particular, and the assurances given to the parties. The Arab leaders affirm that any violation by Israel of the principles on which the peace process is based and any retreat from or procrastination in fulfilling the commitments,

undertakings and agreements secured in that framework may cause a set-back to the process that brings with it such dangers and recriminations as will return the region to the maelstrom of tension and may compel all the Arab States to reconsider the steps taken vis-à-vis Israel in the context of the peace process. The Israeli Government alone would bear the entire responsibility for such a situation.

The Arab leaders further reaffirm their commitment to the United Nations resolutions requiring non-recognition and non-acceptance of any situation resulting from Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Arab territories, inasmuch as such activities are unlawful and create no rights and no obligations. They consider that the establishment of settlements and the introduction of settlers violate the Geneva Conventions and the Madrid framework and represent an impediment to the peace process. There should thus be a halt to all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Syrian Golan and the occupied Palestinian territories, especially Jerusalem, and the settlements should be removed. The leaders affirm their rejection of any alteration to the physical characteristics or legal status of Arab Jerusalem, and they stress that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East can only be achieved by resolving the issue of Jerusalem and settling the problem of the Palestine refugees on the basis of their right to return in accordance with international legitimacy and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In the light of the foregoing, and in order to ensure the success of the peace process on the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian tracks, the Arab leaders call upon the co-sponsors of the peace process, the members of the European Union, Japan, the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other concerned States and upon the United Nations and other relevant international organizations and institutions to ensure that Israel does not violate the principles of the peace process and that it honours the undertakings it has given with regard to the agreements on interim arrangements and issues for the final status negotiations and to continue to provide the necessary political and economic support to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority. In this connection, the leaders affirmed the need to end the blockade imposed by Israel on the Palestinian people.

The Arab leaders affirm their support for Lebanon in the context of the continuing Israeli attacks on its territory, its people and its sovereignty. They urge the international community to ensure that there is an immediate and unconditional halt to these attacks and an end to occupation and to hold Israel responsible for compensating Lebanon for all the damage inflicted on it.

The Arab leaders affirm that Israel must accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all its nuclear installations under the international inspection regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. They also renew their call for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and primarily nuclear weapons, that will encompass all the States of the region including Israel. They affirm their resolve to take the necessary steps to protect the region from the perils of such weapons and to spare it an arms race that would increase tension and waste the region's resources and capacities.

The Arab leaders emphasize that the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the real guarantee for ensuring the security of all the States of the region.

Given the importance of enhancing the global security of the Arab nation in order to meet the challenges to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and natural resources of the Arab States, and given the close linkage between global Arab security, taken in its widest sense and viewed as an indivisible whole, and the national security of each Arab State, the Arab leaders affirm their determination to promote Arab solidarity as the correct means of achieving the goals of joint Arab action based on respect for such cardinal principles of the inter-Arab order as respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States and for sovereignty over natural and economic resources, non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States, the peaceful resolution of bilateral problems between Arab States in accordance with the principles of international law, and respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Pact of the League of Arab States and the agreements concluded within the framework of the League. They affirm that ensuring Arab national security, in its global sense, is the most effective means of safeguarding the integrity and protecting the interests of the Arab nation.

In the light of the common interests of the Arab States and the recent international developments that have prompted the creation of larger economic groupings, the Arab leaders affirm that the ability of the Arab States to enhance their role and strengthen their participation at the international level requires that Arab development be achieved, that a more active role be assigned to the institutions of joint Arab economic action and that the decisions adopted by those institutions be implemented. Accordingly, the Arab leaders have instructed the Council of the League and its Economic and Social Council to develop and implement integrated economic and social strategies and plans of action to allow the Arab nation to promote its higher economic interests and give it the ability to deal with its partners in the present world economic order on an equal footing.

With a view to strengthening the League of Arab States, the Arab leaders affirmed their resolve to enhance its standing and to assign it a more active role. They stressed the need for compliance with the Pact of the League and with League resolutions in order to safeguard the higher interests of the Arab nation. In this connection, the Arab leaders emphasized that it was essential for financial commitments to the League to be met.

In the context of their review of inter-Arab and regional issues:

The Arab leaders express their solidarity with Bahrain and their full support for the measures it is taking to ensure stability and security. They expressed strong disapproval of any interference in the internal affairs of Bahrain, and they affirmed that they would support it against any attempts at intimidation made by any party whatever. They call upon Iran to respect the sovereignty of Bahrain, within a framework of mutual respect and relations of good-neighbourliness and with a view to promoting security and stability in the region, by refraining from subversive actions against it.

The Arab leaders affirm the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa and express their support for all the peaceful measures it is taking with a view to restoring its sovereignty over the three islands. They urge Iran to end its occupation, to desist from a policy of imposing a fait accompli by force and to pursue peaceful means of resolving the dispute in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, including referral of the issue to the International Court of Justice. The Arab leaders request the Secretary-General of the League to monitor the issue of the Iranian occupation of the islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and to submit a report thereon to the next Arab Summit Conference.

The Arab leaders express the hope that traditional Arab-Turkish relations and common interests will be maintained. In this connection, they express concern with regard to the Israeli-Turkish military agreement, and they call upon Turkey to reconsider the agreement so as to prevent any encroachment on the security of the Arab States.

The Arab leaders affirm their commitment to the view that the unity of Iraq must be maintained and their opposition to any policies or measures that may affect its territorial integrity or jeopardize its boundaries and national unity. They urge the Iraqi Government to undertake not to embark on any aggressive policies aimed at provoking its Arab neighbours and to implement in full all the relevant Security Council resolutions and especially those requiring it to take the necessary measures to release all Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners and detainees, to return the property seized and to comply with the compensation mechanism. They regard this as the right way to ensure that the sanctions imposed on Iraq are lifted and the appropriate conditions created for Iraq to resume its role in the inter-Arab regional order. The Arab leaders welcome the agreement reached by Iraq and the United Nations for the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995) as a positive step towards mitigating the suffering of the Iraqi people for which the Iraqi Government is responsible. They call for the speedy implementation of this agreement.

The Arab leaders welcome the Agreement on Principles signed by the Governments of Yemen and Eritrea submitting the dispute between them to international arbitration. They also welcome the restoration of peaceful relations between the two countries in the light of their proximity and common interests, given the positive repercussions this will have on the continuity and stability of international navigation in the Red Sea.

The leaders express their deep concern at the human and material losses inflicted on the Libyan Arab people by the harsh measures imposed on it under Security Council resolutions 748 (1992) and 883 (1993). They consider that the failure to respond to the efforts made by the Jamahiriya, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference has greatly delayed a solution to the crisis and has compounded the suffering of the Libyan Arab people. The leaders are of the view that the League's proposal, which has won broad international support, that the two suspects, provided with the necessary guarantees, should be given a fair and impartial trial at The Hague before

Scottish judges and under Scots law, is a workable and appropriate one that could bring an end to the crisis. They therefore call upon the three Western States concerned to adopt a positive attitude towards this proposal so as to end the crisis and alleviate the unjustifiably prolonged suffering of the Libyan Arab people. The Arab leaders further call for the lifting of the sanctions imposed on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, particularly since their maintenance could force the Arab States to consider possible means of sparing the Libyan people further losses.

The Arab leaders express their concern at the continuing deterioration of the situation in Somalia and call on the leaders of the Somali factions to meet their responsibilities by achieving national reconciliation, resolving their differences and forming a national authority in which all groups of the Somali people are represented.

While the Arab leaders deplore all attempts to stigmatize legitimate national resistance as terrorism, they condemn those acts of terrorism, sabotage and disruption in all their forms to which a number of States, including Arab States, are being subjected with the aim of undermining their security and stability. They express their support for these States and for the efforts being made and the steps being taken to convene an international conference to address the various aspects of the phenomenon of international terrorism. At the same time, they firmly uphold the inalienable right to resist occupation and aggression.

The Arab Summit took note of the floods that have afflicted the Republic of Yemen, causing loss of life and the destruction of homes and infrastructure in several of the country's provinces. The Arab leaders offer their condolences to the Yemeni people, affirm their support for the Republic of Yemen and urge the relevant international organizations to provide the country with all the assistance and support it may need.

The Arab leaders further agreed to continue their consultations and meetings in order to follow up the implementation of the decisions they had adopted and address developments that might affect the Arab nation. In this context, and in the light of anticipated requirements and circumstances, it was agreed that:

1. President Mubarak of Egypt, as Chairman of the current Summit, should conduct the necessary consultations with Arab leaders and the Secretary-General of the League with a view to taking follow-up action and reaching agreement on the convening of the next summit;

2. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs should be instructed to convene a meeting to review developments relating to the peace process shortly before the meeting of the Council of the League scheduled for September 1996 or as otherwise required.

The leaders expressed their deep gratitude and appreciation to President Mubarak and the people of Egypt for the warm hospitality with which they had been received and for the efficient way the conference had been organized and preparations made. They conveyed to President Mubarak the

assurances of their highest regard and wished the people of Egypt continued progress and prosperity.

RESOLUTION

The Arab Summit Conference, meeting in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996,

Having considered the resolutions and communiqués adopted by the Arab Summit Conferences and the Council of the League of Arab States concerning the promotion of joint Arab action and the strengthening of its mechanisms,

Invoking the purposes and principles set forth in the Pact of the League of Arab States,

Inspired by the address delivered by President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt at the commemorative session held by the Council of the League on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the League of Arab States,

Appreciating the present circumstances of the Arab nation, the challenges to joint Arab action and its organs and the new developments that have taken place at the regional and international levels,

Desiring to strengthen and develop inter-Arab relations in order to serve the higher goals of the Arab nation and safeguard its security,

RESOLVES

1. To agree in principle on:

(a) The establishment of an Arab Court of Justice;

(b) A code of conduct for Arab security and cooperation;

(c) The establishment of a League of Arab States Mechanism for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts among Arab States;

2. To entrust the Ministers for Foreign Affairs with the task of finalizing their respective drafts;

3. To refer the proposal of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for an Arab Union to the Council of the League for consideration and presentation to the next Arab Summit.

DECISION

In accordance with the goals for the stimulation of joint Arab economic action affirmed in the final communiqué and with reference to resolution 1272 adopted on 6 March 1996 by the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States at its fifty-seventh session,

The Arab Summit Conference, meeting in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996, decides:

To request the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States to take the necessary steps to expedite the establishment of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area in accordance with a programme of action and a timetable to be agreed upon.